

INFORMATION & CONSENT SHEET

INVITATION TO TAKE PART

You are being invited to take part in a research study to further our understanding of the influence of social media algorithms on political beliefs and behaviours. Thank you for carefully reading this information sheet, a copy of which you can keep for your records. This study is being conducted by student researcher Luke Higgins and project supervisor Professor Alan Garnham from the School of Psychology, University of Sussex, who are happy to be contacted (lh624@sussex.ac.uk) if you have any questions.

WHY HAVE I BEEN INVITED TO TAKE PART AND WHAT WILL I DO?

We are surveying 60-100 young adults aged 18-30, and the questionnaire will take approximately 15-20 minutes. You will complete an anonymized questionnaire and can optionally provide a screenshot of your 'screen time' according to your phone. We will be measuring participants' political beliefs, the intensity of these beliefs, and their use of social media. The survey will also capture information about the types of content participants engage with and how they feel it impacts their views.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN TO THE RESULTS AND MY PERSONAL INFORMATION?

The results of this research may be written into a scientific report for a Psychology (BSC) dissertation and/or publication. We anticipate being able to provide a summary of our findings on request from June 2025 (lh624@sussex.ac.uk). Your anonymity will be ensured in the way described in the consent information below. Please read this information carefully and then, if you wish to take part, please sign to show you have fully understood this sheet, and that you consent to take part in the study as it is described here.

CONSENT

- I understand that by signing below I am agreeing to take part in the University of Sussex research described here, and that I have read and understood this information sheet.
- I understand that my participation is entirely voluntary, that I can choose not to participate in part or all of the study, and that I can withdraw at any stage without having to give a reason and without being penalised in any way (e.g., if I am a student, my decision whether or not to take part will not affect my grades).
- I understand that since the study is anonymous, it will be impossible to withdraw my data once I have completed and submitted the test/questionnaire.
- I understand that my personal data will be used for the purposes of this research study and will be handled in accordance with [Data Protection legislation](#). I understand that the University's [Privacy Notice](#) provides further information on how the University uses personal data in its research..
- I understand that my collected data will be stored in a de-identified way (e.g. using ID numbers not names), and kept separate from other details about me (e.g. from the consent form). Electronic data will be stored securely on a University managed system, and hard-copies will be stored behind a locked door.
- I understand that my identity will remain confidential in any written reports of this research, and that no information I disclose will lead to the identification in those reports of any individual either by the researchers or by any other party, without first obtaining my written permission.

For further information about this research please contact Luke Higgins (lh624@sussex.ac.uk) OR the project supervisor Professor Alan Garnham (a.garnham@sussex.ac.uk). This research has been approved ([reference number]) by the School of Psychology. If you have any ethical concerns, please contact the project supervisor Professor Alan Garnham (a.garnham@sussex.ac.uk). The University of Sussex has insurance in place to cover its legal liabilities in respect of this study.

Study Name: Investigating the effect of social media algorithms on political beliefs and radicalisation

- I understand that my name and data will not be shared with any third party outside the research group, unless I later provide written permission.

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